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All persons are by nature free and independent, and have certain natural and unalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.

-- Article 1, Section 1, New Jersey State Constitution

Hardline U.S. 'gundamentalists' pressure NRA from within

By Daniel Trotta

(Reuters) - About 100 protesters, many wearing T-shirts emblazoned with "NRA = Not Real Activists," marched through the National Rifle Association's annual meeting in Dallas in May to slam the powerful gun lobby as too conciliatory on gun rights and rally for their candidate for the board.

Adam Kraut, a gun rights lawyer, fell about 4,000 votes short of the 71,000 needed for election, but earned 5,000 more than the previous year, a sign of the growth of the Second Amendment purists within the NRA known to many as "gundamentalists."

Its rise has rattled the NRA leadership and threatens the association's ability to hold on to moderate supporters and to make compromises that might help fend off tougher gun control measures.

The NRA has faced divisions before. An internal revolt at the 1977 meeting in Cincinnati turned the polite, sport-shooting organization into a bare-knuckled political lobby that today claims five million members.

The NRA leadership has put up obstacles to Kraut's election, both with bylaws that make it harder for candidates not put forward by the nominating committee to get elected to the board, and by enlisting a senior member to campaign against him.

Marion Hammer, a past president of the NRA and one of the group's most successful lobbyists, denounced unsanctioned candidates in a column on the website Ammoland just as Kraut appeared on the 2018 ballot. Though Hammer did not name Kraut, he was one of only two non-approved candidates to run.

The Dallas protesters, almost all white men, included bearded outdoorsmen and buttoned-down libertarians.

Kraut, 31, practices firearms law in suburban Philadelphia and also hosts a video blog called The Legal Brief on The Gun Collective, a YouTube channel.

He wants to impose term limits for board members and mandatory meeting attendance, to renew its leadership.

One of Kraut's most prominent supporters, Tim Harmsen, who led the pro-Kraut march through the convention center, has 770,000 subscribers to the Military Arms Channel on YouTube, where he criticizes the NRA for being weak on gun laws.

These hardliners deeply cherish their right under the U.S. Constitution's Second Amendment to keep and bear arms. They oppose any form of gun control, saying criminals will find ways around gun laws, which only strip lawful gun owners of the right to self-defense and protection against state tyranny.

The gun-rights purists are outraged by any concessions the NRA makes in the wake of mass shootings, even if they are made to avoid stricter gun control laws.

After a shooter killed 58 people at a country music concert in Las Vegas last year, the NRA supported federal regulation of bump stocks, accessories that the gunman used to fire his semiautomatic rifles more quickly. The Justice Department then ordered an effective ban that is close to being finalized.

Amid nationwide protests that followed a Florida high school shooting that killed 17 people in February, the NRA endorsed strengthening background checks for gun purchasers and emergency protection orders that allow law-enforcement officials to temporarily take guns away from people deemed dangerous.

"For us, some of the things that come out of NRA headquarters are just outrageous and abhorrent," said Jeff Knox, a Kraut supporter whose father, Neal Knox, led the "Revolt at Cincinnati" in 1977. "It's: Holy cow, what are these guys thinking?"

-- August 5, 2018

NRA notes anti-gun David Hogg's 'armed security'

'Guns for me, but not for thee'

The National Rifle Association taunted gun control activist David Hogg and his group's Saturday protest at its Fairfax, Virginia, headquarters by noting his security.

"Today, @davidhogg111 (with armed security) and a bunch of gun-grabbing activists protested our empty HQ," the gun-rights organization wrote on Twitter on Saturday night.

-- Washington Times August 6, 2018

Copenhagen Imam: 'Jihad necessitates the Muslim invasion and conquest of Europe'

By Simon Kent

Imam Mundhir Abdallah, of the Masjid Al-Faruq mosque in Copenhagen, told his followers "the final solution to the problem of the Levant – after the establishment of the Caliphate and the elimination of the Jewish entity – will be through the conquest of Europe."

Abdallah was speaking on a video first released in 2017. It has now been made public and translated by the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) just a week after he was charged with hate speech over a

separate incident where repeated a call to kill Jews.

In the latest video, Abdallah lays out a plan whereby Muslims can conquer all of Europe and deliver a final blow to the "vileness" of the Jewish people.

"Europe must be invaded again," he said, calling for a new Islamic conquest of Al-Andalus, the Balkans, and Rome, in order to fulfill the promise of the Prophet Muhammad.

Last week, charges were brought against Imam Abdallah for hate speech, following MEMRI translation of a Friday sermon in which he recited the anti-Semitic hadith about the Prophecy of the Rock and the Tree.

This is the first time charges have been brought in Denmark under a new criminal code.

For his part, Abdallah – who lives in Lebanon and has family in Denmark – has always claimed the charge of hate speech is a conspiracy and he is an entirely innocent party.

"Politicians in the West and the media never stop attacking Islam and Muslims. Their propaganda never stops. Muslims are the real victims, not others. Our women are being attacked, our mosques are being burned," he said last year when the charges were first being considered. --
www.breitbart.com 30 July 2018

Muslim on rape: "Yes, I did that. Why not?"

'Assault occurs in all cultures, but only in Islam does it have divine sanction'

"Yes, I did that. Why not?"

Those are the words of a Muslim man accused of abducting a 17-year-old girl, taking her into a cemetery and violently raping her.

He insisted there was no need for further explanation.

Robert Spencer, the director of Jihad Watch, explained how the Muslim sexual predator, Ishaq Al-Noor, could even ask that question.

"Here's how: sexual assault occurs in all cultures, but only in Islam does it have divine sanction."

Spencer noted that one survivor of a Muslim rape gang in the U.K. said her rapists quotes the Quran to her and believed their actions justified by Islam.

"The Quran teaches that infidel women can be lawfully taken for sexual use," Spencer points out, citing Quran 4:3, 4:24, 23:1-6, 33:50 and 70:30).

The Islamic holy book, in 33:59, says: "O Prophet, tell your wives

and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves of their outer garments. That is more suitable that they will be known and not be abused. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful."

The implication, Spencer said, is that "if women do not cover themselves adequately with their outer garments, they may be abused, and that such abuse would be justified."

A Voice of Europe report said Al-Noor, 21, was sentenced to 16 years in prison for the rape and will be deported [to Sudan] after serving his sentence

-- worldnetdaily.com Aug. 10, 2018

NJ Attorney General and L.A. city attorney sued for threatening legal action over 3-D printed guns

By Jenni Fink

Cody Wilson, the owner of Defense Distributed, a company that created plans for printing a 3-D gun, filed a lawsuit on Sunday against New Jersey Attorney General Gurbir Grewal and Los Angeles City Attorney Michael Feuer for attempting to block the plans from being downloaded.

The suit charges Grewal and Feuer with waging "an ideologically-fueled program of intimidation and harassment against Defense Distributed" in an effort to "silence the organization" through criminal and civil tribunals."

On Thursday, Grewal sent a cease-and-desist letter to Wilson with the demand that Defense Distributed prevent New Jersey residents from being able to download printable gun computer files.

"The files you plan to publish offer individuals, including criminals, codes that they can use to create untraceable firearms—and even to make assault weapons that are illegal in my state," the letter stated, also threatening legal action if published.

On Wednesday, Feuer, along with Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance, Jr., urged the State Department to block the blueprints from being published, because "no one is safer if criminals can print untraceable guns on demand."

In response to the Grewal and Feuer's actions to prevent the plans from being downloaded by all Americans, Wilson's suit charged the defendants with a total of nine counts. Among the points made in the suit was that the State Department authorized Defense Distributed to publish the plans and grant every

person in the United States access to the files, thereby taking precedence over state firearm laws.

"New Jersey and Los Angeles can no more prohibit the operation of a federally licensed export framework than could Maryland prohibit the operation of a federally chartered bank," the suit states.

The suit was filed with the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas and seeks declaratory and injunctive relief, damages and attorney fees. The plaintiff requested a jury trial.

Ahead of filing the suit, Defense Distributed put in measures that blocked users with IP addresses in Los Angeles and New Jersey from accessing the files.

Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro, Governor Tom Wolf and state police announced that Defense Distributed also agreed to block access to the files for Pennsylvania users as well, according to WGAL.

Starting August 1, the plans for a 3-D-printed gun called "The Liberator" are set to become available nationwide after a yearslong battle with the State Department, which ended in a settlement that permitted their release.

-- newsweek.com 7/30/18

Judge's order backfires as activists rush to share 3D gun designs

By Stephen Dinan and Gabriella Munoz

A judge's attempt to halt the spread of blueprints for 3D-printed guns backfired Wednesday as the plans spread across the internet, posted and shared by people who said they were determined to strike a blow for free speech, to protect gun rights, or just to thumb their nose at the government.

Activists took to Twitter and Facebook to share links where the plans could be found on file-sharing services or sites on the dark web.

One website, CodersFreeSpeech.com, posted eight sets of files and reported more than 100,000 hits and nearly 1.5 terabytes of data downloaded by 6 a.m. Wednesday.

In a flurry of legal activity late Tuesday, a judge ordered the federal government to reimpose Obama-era export restrictions that limited the availability of the files. That order was aimed at stopping Defense Distributed, a Texas-based organization, from posting blueprints to its website, DEFCAD.com.

Cody Wilson, the site's founder, complied, but much of the rest of the internet stepped in to fill the void. "Do your human duty and share," said one Twitter user who linked to the files on a file-sharing site.

The technology of 3D printing and plans would allow people with access to the right machinery and materials to manufacture a working, untraceable firearm in secret. The concept has existed for decades but has just recently begun to reach the mainstream.

Some security specialists worry that the guns could circumvent metal detectors and become a tool for terrorists. Gun control activists say people banned from buying guns, such as felons and domestic abusers, also would be able to cheat the law by printing weapons at home.

Defense Distributed and like-minded groups counter that they are releasing information protected by free speech, not engaging in firearms transactions.

They also say the plans have been available for years online and there is little the government can — or should — do. Further, the possession of undetectable guns has been illegal for decades and most blueprints for 3D guns, including those of Defense Distributed, use at least some metal parts to comply with that law.

-- Washington Times August 1, 2018

FBI still has relationship with discredited SPLC

By Art Moore

The FBI's admission that it has been working with the controversial Southern Poverty Law Center has prompted a demand for more information from U.S. Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fla.,

A copy of the letter was obtained by the Fox News Channel's "Tucker Carlson Tonight."

"The SPLC is known to use its platform in order to denigrate and disparage certain groups by labeling them 'hate groups,'" the congressman wrote. "SPLC puts groups such as the Family Research Council on its 'hate' list because of their support for traditional marriage, while ignoring left-wing groups that engage in violence, such as Antifa. The SPLC's conflation of mainstream political advocacy groups with legitimate hate groups and domestic terror groups is absurd, frequently indiscriminate and dangerous," he said.

The FBI confirmed that it "continues to have a relationship with the SPLC."

SPLC has briefed the FBI on alleged domestic terror threats in the U.S., the Fox News show said.

The FBI explained, "For many years, the FBI has engaged with various organizations, both formally and informally. Such outreach is a critical component of the FBI's mission, and we welcome information from these organizations on any possible violations of civil rights, hate crimes or other potential crimes or threats. We do, however, evaluate our relationships with these groups as necessary to ensure the appropriateness of any interaction."

Attorney General Jeff Sessions has "directed the FBI to re-evaluate their relationships with groups like this to ensure the FBI does not partner with any group that discriminates," a spokesman

.WND reported earlier this month the vice chairman of the Democratic National Committee, Rep. Keith Ellison, D-Minn., is asking Amazon to stop the retail giant's "sale of literature and music published by entities identified as 'hate groups' by the Southern Poverty Law Center."

The Religious Freedom Coalition was dumped from the AmazonSmile charity program because SPLC labeled it a "hate group."

An Amazon lawyer said the company "relies on the U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control and the Southern Poverty Law Center to determine which registered charities fall into [the category of excluded] groups."

- www.wnd.com July 30, 2018

Facebook, Apple remove most of U.S. conspiracy theorist's content

By Rich McKay

ATLANTA (Reuters) -

Facebook Inc announced on Monday that it had removed four pages belonging to U.S. conspiracy theorist Alex Jones "for glorifying violence, which violates our graphic violence policy, and using dehumanizing language to describe people who are transgender, Muslims and immigrants, which violates our hate speech policies."

"Facebook bans Infowars. Permanently. Infowars was widely credited with playing a key role in getting Trump elected. This is a coordinated move ahead of the mid-terms to help Democrats. This is political censorship. This is culture war,"

Infowars editor-at-large Paul Joseph Watson tweeted.

Since founding Infowars in 1999, Jones has built a vast audience. Among the theories he has promoted is that the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on New York and Washington were staged by the government.

Facebook had earlier suspended the radio and Internet host's personal profile for 30 days in late July from its site for what the company said was bullying and hate speech.

Most of Jones's podcasts from his right-wing media platform Infowars have been removed from Apple Inc's iTunes and podcast apps, the media news website BuzzFeed quoted a company spokesman as saying.

The moves by Apple and Facebook are the most sweeping of a recent crackdown on Jones's programs by online sites that have suspended or removed some of his conspiracy-driven content.

Apple said in a statement, "We believe in representing a wide range of views, so long as people are respectful to those with differing opinions."

Also, Spotify, a music and podcast streaming company, said on Monday that it had now removed all of Jones's Infowars programs from its platform.

"We take reports of hate content seriously and review any podcast episode or song that is flagged by our community," a representative said Monday.

Jones has also promoted a theory that the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting was inspired by left-wing forces to promote gun control. The shooting left 26 children and adults dead at a Connecticut elementary school.

He is being sued in Texas by two Sandy Hook parents, seeking at least \$1 million, claiming that they have been the subject of harassment driven by his program. - August 6, 2018

Twitter will not ban InfoWars conspiracy theorist Alex Jones

The CEO of Twitter says it will not ban InfoWars or its founder Alex Jones because their accounts do not violate the social media platform's rules.

The radio host is best known for spreading unsubstantiated allegations about tragic events, including 9/11.

CEO Jack Dorsey said it would be wrong to "succumb and

simply react to outside pressure" instead of sticking to the company's codified principles.

Mr Jones mostly uses his Twitter account to share content and videos from InfoWars with his 850,000 followers, and promotes conspiracy theories against liberals, Muslims and migrants.

*In July, he said that Democrats planned to launch a civil war on 4 July or US Independence Day

*Last year, he tweeted that Muslims in England were demanding that the Queen either convert to Islam or leave the country. However, the CNN clip Infowars based its article on dates back to 2009 and features a group led by radical preacher Anjem Choudary, who by 2017 was already serving a five-and-a-half-year sentence for inviting support for the Islamic State group

*He has previously said that "transgenderism" is a CIA "plan to depopulate humanity" and that the normalisation of mental illness is an "evil paedophile plot to sexualise and destroy children"

*In 2013, he described then President Barack Obama as the "global head of al-Qaeda", and later accused him of arming IS

The InfoWars app has seen a surge in popularity since Mr Jones' content was taken down from YouTube and Facebook, rising to number 4 in the news category in Apple's App Store.

A number of well-known far-right figures including Tommy Robinson have been banned from Twitter in recent months as part of a wider crackdown on hateful and abusive content on the platform. (Tommy Robinson has been jailed for 13 months after breaking contempt of court laws for streaming a Facebook Live outside Leeds court in England.)
-- www.bbc.co.uk August 8, 2018

Report: More than ½ of immigrants on welfare

A new study finds that more than half of immigrants, both illegal and legal, use welfare of some kind.

The Center for Immigration Studies report also found that immigrants are using 57 percent more taxpayer-funded food stamps than native-born Americans.

The study is the first in recent years to examine immigrant and native-born welfare use — including Medicaid and cash, food, and housing programs — based on the Census Bureau's Survey of Income and Program Participation.

CIS found that in 2012, 51 percent of households headed by an immigrant, legal or illegal, reported they used at least one welfare program during the year.

That contrasts with 30 percent of native-born households using welfare of some kind.

Steven A. Camarota, the director of research for CIS, said that if one "assumes that immigration is supposed to benefit the country, then immigrant welfare use should be much lower than natives'."

Instead, "two decades after welfare reform tried to curtail immigrant eligibility, immigrant-headed households are using welfare at much higher rates than native households for most programs."

Camarota pointed out that most of the immigrant population is not covered by the restrictions, and numerous exceptions allow access to the welfare system.

Furthermore, he said, immigrants often receive benefits on behalf of their U.S.-born children.

"The findings of this analysis have important policy implications," he said Camarota. "Perhaps most important, the significantly higher welfare use associated with immigrants means that it is very likely immigration is a drain on public coffers, exacerbating the nation's fiscal deficit."

-- www.wnd.com August 10, 2018

Ed.: If 51% of immigrants and 30% of native born Americans receive welfare, how much longer will we be able to retain our liberty and self-reliant heritage?

Another year of campus carry. Yawn

By Rob Morse

Yawn. Well, that was dull. We had another year of campus carry, and no one noticed. Yes, another year went by and legally licensed concealed carry holders were armed on post-secondary campuses across the country. We were told that drunk and drugged-up students who had a carry permit would kill each other over parking places, that faculty would be shot down for teaching unpopular courses. It never happened.

Georgia's campus carry law took effect in July of last year. Nothing happened, and newspaper editors across Georgia were shocked.

Kansas started last year as well. We were told that the river of blood would overflow the state's borders. Turns out the rivers never turned red or even pink.

Campus carry was legal for junior colleges in Texas as of August of last year. It has been two years for Texas Universities and Colleges. Texas also has 1.2 million permit holders who have been on campus - and we never noticed.

10 states allow licensed concealed carry on campus, though some states require additional training. An additional 23 states let the governing board of each institution set their own policy. Colorado and Utah had campus carry for the last 14 years. . and nothing.

Please remember the media's terrible record the next time a reporter offers up his fantasy about armed america..

...and happy anniversary to campus carry.

-- slowfacts.worldpress.com July 5, 2018

The Second Amendment Had Nothing to Do with Slavery

By Stephen P. Halbrook

For 20 years now, a well-meaning law professor has been peddling the fiction that the Second Amendment—guaranteeing the right of Americans to keep and bear arms—was adopted to protect slavery. He first proposed this in a 1998 law review article and trotted it out again in a recent New York Times op-ed.

The trouble is: It's untrue. Not a single one of America's founders is known to have suggested such a purpose.

When the Redcoats came to disarm the colonists, the American patriots relied on the right to "have arms for their Defense," as stated in the English Declaration of Rights of 1689.

In 1776, Pennsylvania declared: "That the people have a right to bear arms for the defense of themselves, and the state." Vermont copied that language in its constitution, which explicitly abolished slavery. Massachusetts and North Carolina adopted their own versions.

When the states debated adoption of the Constitution without a bill of rights in 1787-88, Samuel Adams proposed the right to bear arms in Massachusetts's ratification convention. The Dissent of the Minority did so in Pennsylvania, and the entire New Hampshire convention demanded recognition of the right.

There was no connection to slavery in any of these historical antecedents.

In his articles, Professor Carl T. Bogus of Roger Williams

University speculates that George Mason's and Patrick Henry's demands in the Virginia ratification convention could have been motivated to protect slavery. Not so.

Mason recalled that "when the resolution of enslaving America was formed in Great Britain, the British Parliament was advised ... to disarm the people; that it was the best and most effectual way to enslave them."

And Patrick Henry implored: "The great object is, that every man be armed." The ensuing debate concerned defense against tyranny and invasion—not slavery.

New York, North Carolina and Rhode Island joined in the demand for what became the Second Amendment. The right to bear arms had universal support.

It was the denial of the right of all "the people" to bear arms that supported slavery. The Supreme Court's notorious Dred Scott decision held that African-Americans could not be regarded as citizens, for otherwise they could hold political meetings and "keep and carry arms wherever they went." Frederick Douglass advocated Second Amendment rights for all, and Sojourner Truth carried guns in helping slaves to escape.

When slavery was abolished, the Southern states prohibited blacks from firearm possession. Congress countered with the Freedmen's Bureau Act of 1866, which protected "the constitutional right to bear arms," without distinction of color. A major impetus for adoption of the 14th Amendment was to protect this right from state violation.

American republican ideals spread to Europe, where subjects sought to break the chains of oppressive government. A draft of the French Declaration of Rights of 1789 stated: "Every citizen has the right to keep arms at home and to use them, either for the common defense or for his own defense." But new aspiring elites did not trust the people and rejected it. The French Revolution would turn into the Terror.

European reformers tried again in the democratic revolutions of 1848, but the forces of reaction crushed them.

Europeans would pay a dear price for not recognizing the right to bear arms. Hitler would disarm political opponents and Jews. The countries he occupied had prewar gun registration lists, which the Nazis used to ferret out gun owners. Many were executed.

None of the above is mentioned in today's history classes. Instead, political elites pounce on every tragedy to attack the Second Amendment right to self-defense and advocate that citizens rely on feckless government for protection.

The Second Amendment has nothing to do with slavery; it never did. The historical injustice is that even after the Constitution's ratification, African-Americans were denied fundamental rights that others enjoyed, including the right to arm themselves to protect their lives and liberties.

-- www.independent.org Posted June 25, 2018. Also published in FoxNews.com June 22, 2018

Stephen P. Halbrook, Ph.D., J.D., is a Senior Fellow at the Independent Institute and author of the new book *Gun Control in Nazi-Occupied France: Tyranny and Resistance*, and *Gun Control in the Third Reich: Disarming the Jews and "Enemies of the State"*, *The Founders' Second Amendment* and *Securing Civil Rights*

Review: *Gun Control in Nazi-Occupied France: Tyranny and Resistance*, by Stephen P. Halbrook

Nazi Germany invaded France in 1940. In every occupied town, Nazi soldiers put up posters that demanded that civilians surrender their firearms within twenty-four hours or else be shot. Despite the consequences, many French citizens refused to comply with the order. In *Gun Control in Nazi-Occupied France: Tyranny and Resistance*, Stephen P. Halbrook tells this story of Nazi repression and the brave French men and women who refused to surrender to it.

Taking advantage of a prewar 1935 French gun registration law, the Nazis used registration records kept by the French police to easily locate gun owners to enforce their demand that firearms be surrendered. Countless French citizens faced firing squads for refusing to comply. But many French citizens had resisted the 1935 decree, preventing the Nazis from fully enforcing the confiscation order. Throughout the Nazi occupation, the French Resistance grew, arming itself to conduct resistance activities and fight back against the occupation.

Drawing on records of the German occupation and testimonies from members of the French resistance, *Gun Control in Nazi-Occupied France* is the first book to focus on the Nazis' efforts to disarm the

French. -- Independent Institute book blurb

More than 4,000 new MKUltra documents requested from CIA

By Andrew Whalen

New documents from Project MKUltra, the Central Intelligence Agency's mind control program, will soon be released. The new records include 4,358 pages regarding MKUltra's "behavior modification" efforts.

John Greenewald, founder of The Black Vault, a site specializing in declassified government records obtained via Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, uploaded tens of thousands of MKUltra pages in 2004.

Still, that represents only a small fraction of the material from the multi-decade program, with the majority lost to history after CIA Director Richard Helms ordered all MKUltra files destroyed in 1973. This makes the new documents crucial to expanding our narrow perspective on the CIA's actions from the operation's beginnings in 1953 through the cover-up twenty years later.

Project MKUltra was an illegal program of human experimentation undertaken by the CIA to discover methods, both pharmacological and psychological, for controlling the human mind, particularly in interrogation settings. Amphetamines, MDMA, scopolamine, cannabis, salvia, sodium pentothal, psilocybin and LSD were administered to thousands of unsuspecting people, throughout the U.S. and Canada. Others were subject to sensory deprivation, psychological abuse and rape, including the sexual abuse of children.

More than 80 colleges, prisons, pharma companies and hospitals collaborated in the program, including renowned psychiatrist Donald Ewen Cameron, who served president of the American Psychiatric Association and the World Psychiatric Association.

The existence of the previously unknown MKUltra pages was discovered in 2016, when a Black Vault user, Oscar Diggs, discovered irregularities in the collection the CIA disclosed to Greenewald. Diggs created a list of missing records and pages described in the index. The CIA refused to fill in the gaps, claiming that extant MKUltra documents pertaining to "behavioral modification" were not the same as those pertaining to "mind control." Greenewald is currently crowdfunding to cover the fees

imposed by the CIA for the remaining 4,358 pages. -- www.newsweek.com
Aug, 15, 2018

Why Americans Have a Right to Own Guns Even if It Makes Us Less Safe

By Timothy Hsaio

Many on both sides of the gun debate are under the impression that the best way to settle it is by weighing outcomes in the context of a cost-benefit analysis. As a result, both sides constantly squabble over the findings of this-or-that empirical study in this-or-that country. Those who support gun ownership cite studies supporting their side, while gun control supporters cite studies purporting to show the opposite.

While I happen to think that the best evidence suggests that gun ownership does not increase crime, the reality is this way of thinking about the gun debate is fundamentally mistaken. What matters is not the risk (or lack thereof) that guns pose to society, but simply whether guns are a reasonable means of self-defense. This isn't to say that empirical findings aren't important, but rather that studies detailing the positive or negative effects of gun ownership or right-to-carry laws aren't relevant to what's at stake in the gun debate.

Consider this: your right to life isn't dependent on whether respecting your life would yield the best set of consequences. It is absolute and unrelenting, even if it would be more beneficial to others if your right were violated. It would be wrong for me to override your right to life in order to harvest your organs to save five people, even if in doing so I produce a more beneficial outcome.

Your life has basic dignity that cannot be defeated in the name of social utility. It isn't dependent on the outcome of a cost-benefit analysis. The same goes for other rights that are derived from the right to life. For example, it would be wrong to rape someone even if doing so would save ten lives. Rights function as moral "trump cards" that override appeals to utility.

We can think of the right of self-defense in similar terms. Since our right to life cannot be overridden in the name of social utility, and since the goal of self-defense is to protect one's life, it stands to reason that our right to self-defense also cannot be overridden in the name of social utility. Like our right to life, our right to defend ourselves is a basic dignity that can't be defeated just because it might produce a net benefit. We don't run a cost-benefit analysis before we allow individuals to defend themselves.

Now, possession of a right entails the possession of a corresponding right to pursue, exercise, or obtain that which you have a right to. A right would not be a right if it did not also provide its bearer with some means to obtain that to which he is entitled. So, if we have the right to self-defense, we also have the right to the means of our defense. In other words, we have a *right to bear arms*. And like the right to life and right of self-defense from which it is derived, the right to bear arms isn't subject to a cost-benefit analysis....--

thefederalist.com/2018/02/27

Timothy Hsiao is a professor of humanities and philosophy at Grantham University.

Wells Fargo Resists the Resistance on Guns

By Harold Hutchison

Citibank and Bank of America have decided to enact their own form of gun control. Even though certain firearms and magazines are legal, BofA will close the account of any merchant who tries to sell them. Furthermore, any Federal Firearms License holder who sells long guns to adults aged 18-20 (who may legally purchase them) is also out of luck with those banks.

Wells Fargo took a stand against such efforts. So, naturally, the American Federation of Teachers is boycotting Wells Fargo. Of course, we all know how the FBI failed to pass on actionable tips about the Parkland school killer. Or how the Broward County Sheriff's Office didn't act despite numerous calls involving the shooter. Never mind the school

resource officer who showed a yellow streak [by not confronting the killer]. The AFT is covering for all that incompetence and instead scapegoating the law-abiding Americans exercising their Second Amendment rights.

The Right may very well win court victories affirming the right to own semiautomatic rifles like the AR-15. But if the Left convinces banks to close the accounts of anyone who makes or sells them, then we have a problem. We will have the legal right to buy an AR-15, but banks will shut down sales. The Left will push credit card companies to act as well.

The Left is trying to gain what it cannot get through legislation or the courts. As was done before under President Obama and AG Eric Holder's Operation Chokepoint — an attempt to ban on-line processing of payments of unfavored, legal businesses....

-- <https://patriotpost.us> April 23, 2018

Letter to the Editor

Nice to see Dr. Peter Breggin MD's front page article about Psychiatry's implication in too many mass shootings. The doctor is a frequent after-incidents guest on George Noory's Coast-to-Coast radio talkshow at night.

An interesting statistic might be just how many in this country are dying today of addiction to doctor prescribed pain-killing narcotic, and how many due to shootings with so-called "assault rifles"?

AA, Texas

.Ed.: AA, According to www.hhs.gov 42,249 people died from overdosing on opioids in 2016. 17,087 deaths were attributed to prescription opioids; 15,469 to heroin; and 19,413 to synthetic opioids other than methadone, particularly those involving illicitly-manufactured fentanyl.

According to ucr.fbi.gov, in 2016 374 people were murdered with rifles. Subsets by type e.g. bolt action, .22 caliber, assault rifle, were not provided.

NJM, P.O. Box 10176, Trenton New Jersey 08650

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Back issues, from 1997 to date, can be found online. Just go to: <https://archive.org/> and in the Search Field, type in "New Jersey Militia Newsletter". So grab the PDFs and pass them around via email to others who have never seen the hard copies.

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